



# TOWN OF UPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

## Economic Development Committee

### Meeting Minutes

***Date: January 25, 2021***

***Location: Remote***

#### **A: Call to Order**

Having a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 7:04 pm

#### **B: In Attendance**

##### Committee Members

- Gene Bernat
- David Brooks
- Donna Desjardins
- Steven Rakitin
- Dave Ross - Chair
- Craig Weinfuss
- Katherine Worsham

Guests: Kelly McElreath, Town Clerk and Assistant to Town Manager  
Paul Dell'Aquila, Economic Development Coordinator/Town Planner  
Brian Goodman and Eric Martin, Rushford & Sons Brewery

#### **C: Discussion**

##### **1. Agenda and Minutes**

The committee approved the agenda and meeting minutes from January 11th.

##### **2. Update from Paul Dell'Aquila ED Coordinator/Town Planner**

**Rapid Recovery Grant Program** – The Town was informed that we need to pick one study area. The application had two areas, Upton Center and West Upton. The committee discussed this and agreed that we need to focus on Upton Center with an incremental approach. Paul will speak with the state and indicate our focus would be on Upton Center. The grant would match the town with consultants to help us, on the order of \$10-15k.

**BV Chamber of Commerce** – Paul met with Jeannie Hebert and she is open to doing a virtual business roundtable with the town and local businesses perhaps this spring-summer.

**Meeting with Brewery** – Paul met with the brewery guys to discuss their plans.

**Zoning Changes** – do they still need 2/3 vote or majority only for housing zoning? Paul to confirm.

### **3. Update on Gilchrist Property**

Dave R. met with ConCom and Agent. They saw no issues with creating a boardwalk access to Heritage Park. The cost of building a boardwalk may be prohibitive. Most basic option for 100-foot walk would be \$65k+ without site work, design or permitting. Total could easily be \$100k plus cost of land (about \$30k). Dave R. spoke with several other boards about the project and did not get support.

We agreed to table the article that was approved at our last meeting.

### **4. Update from Rushford & Sons Brewery**

**Brian Goodman and Eric Martin** – opened for curbside pickup December 3, 2020. Interested in outdoor seating and possibly doing some renovations to their building. They would need to comply with the Design Guidelines. Sent the committee a rendering of proposed renovation to the exterior. Asked about exterior lighting. They are planning on demolishing the other two buildings on site and building a new 3-½ story mixed use building.

Hoping to have outdoor seating by April. 28-40 outdoor seats possible in the space. Now have 12 spaces. Would be reduced to 6. Needs to be re-lined. Could rely on municipal parking. Will be meeting with the Planning Board about this. Would also include two temporary rest rooms with a sink.

Long-term would like a patio style beer garden in the back facing the brook (2023?). Need to present to Planning and ConCom.

### **5. Discussion on project leads (who wants to run point on different items related to goals in the Economic Development Plan)**

We went through the 5 goals in the ED Plan and members volunteered to work on individual items. The assignments are attached.

### **6. Set Next Meeting Date**

Monday February 8<sup>th</sup> 7pm.

### **7. Other topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours in advance.**

The town has joined Main Street America. The membership includes up to 4 logins.

### **8. Audience Participation**

None.

### **9. Look ahead topics**

- a. Design Standards (Draft 7 may be latest)
- b. RFP Editing and Issuance (Dave R. to share)
- c. Rte 140 TIP Project – 25% Design Complete public hearing may be Q1 2021

**D: Committee Actions and Action Items**

1. A motion was made and seconded to approve tonight's agenda and meeting minutes from January 11 2021. Motion was approved by unanimous vote of the members present.
2. A motion was made and seconded to table the article for purchasing the Gilchrist property. Motion was approved by unanimous vote of members present.

**E: Next Meeting**

Next meeting is scheduled for Feb 8, 2021 at 7pm.

**F: Meeting Adjourned**

Upon unanimous vote of the members present, the meeting was adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted

Steven R. Rakitin  
Clerk

## EDC COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

### GOAL 1: IMPLEMENT UPTON CENTER REVITALIZATION

1	Action Plans	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	EDC Members
1.1	Use a business and resident needs survey to help develop plans for the second phase of Upton Center Revitalization Project.	EDC Town Planner	2021	Gene
1.2	Use the survey data to create a new Request for Proposals (RFP) for Upton Center Revitalization. Post a revised RFP to the Central Register.	EDC Town Planner	2021	Gene, Craig, Katherine
1.3	Support development of the Community Center at May Town Meeting (Library/Senior Center).	EDC and CCBC	May 2021	Committee
1.4	Coordinate with MA DOT District 3 on Rte. 140 TIP Project to minimize impact with potential Community Center and Upton Center development projects.	EDC, DPW, Town Planner	2021-2022	Steve, Gene
1.5	Work with DPW on the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan for Upton Center.	EDC and DPW	2021	Dave R., David B.

### GOAL 2: IDENTIFY POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS FOR WEST UPTON CENTER

2	Action Plans	Responsible Parties	Time Frame	EDC Members
2.1	Review current zoning by-laws in West Upton Center. Determine if there are any by-laws that should be updated.	EDC, Planning Board, Town Planner	2021	Steve
2.2	Create design guidelines for West Upton Center similar to those created for Upton Center.	EDC, Planning Board, Town Planner	2022	Craig, Katherine
2.3	Coordinate with MassDOT District 3 on Hartford Ave/High Street TIP Project and keep residents informed of project impact.	EDC, DPW, Town Planner	2021	Steve, Gene
2.4	Review Complete Streets Prioritization Plan in West Upton Center.	EDC, DPW, Town Planner	2022	Dave R. and David B.
2.5	Coordinate with MassDOT District 3 on the Rte 140 TIP project to assess impact to West Upton Center.	EDC, DPW, Town Planner	2022	Steve, Gene

**GOAL 3: STREAMLINE MUNICIPAL PROCEDURES**

<b>3</b>	<b>Action Plans</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>EDC Members</b>
3.1	Add an Economic Development page to the Town Website	EDC and Technology Committee	2021	Steve, Dave R.
3.2	Create an Upton Small Business resource guide to help small businesses that want to locate in Upton.	EDC and Town Planner	2021	Steve, Donna
3.3	Enhance online permitting software currently being used by the Town of Upton.	EDC and various town departments	2022	Steve, David B.
3.4	Create business reviews board to meeting periodically to assist in the process of starting a business and also helping with any assistance that might be needed by and existing business in Upton.	EDC and Town Manager	2022	Paul, Donna

**GOAL 4: FOSTER BUSINESS GROWTH**

<b>4</b>	<b>Action Plans</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>EDC Members</b>
4.1	Inventory existing businesses and vacancies in commercial and industrial zones to determine mix, needs, and opportunities.	EDC and local realtors	2023	Donna, Gene
4.2	Conduct a study of infrastructure needs throughout Upton.	EDC and town departments	2023	Gene
4.3	Promote the use of vacant buildings as business incubators.	EDC and local realtors	2022	Gene, Craig
4.4	Update list of small business and home business listings and post/maintain listing on town website.	EDC	2022	Steve Help from Grant?
4.5	Promote creation of a small business association and encourage business owners to participate.	EDC and local business leaders	2023	Gene
4.6	Consider CMRPC Brownfields Program for any necessary remediation of commercial/ industrial property.	EDC and Town Planner	2023	Gene
4.7	Work with Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce to host a local Upton Business Roundtable.	EDC and Town Planner	2022	Steve
4.8	Work with local businesses on hosting an annual Small Business Fair.	EDC and local businesses	2022	Steve, Craig

**GOAL 5: LEVERAGE EXISTING CULTURAL RESOURCES AND PUBLIC UTILITIES**

<b>5</b>	<b>Action Plans</b>	<b>Responsible Parties</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>	<b>EDC Members</b>
5.1	Leverage existing State Forest Land and town conservation land to help transform Upton into an eco-tourism destination.	EDC, Open Space Committee, Land Stewardship Com	3-5 years	Gene
5.2	Explore expanding existing Walking Tour of Upton to include Milhaus, Town Hall, Bradish House and other historical sites.	EDC, Historical Commission, Historical Society	3-5 years	Gene, Katherine, Craig
5.3	Develop a commuter survey for Upton residents to determine commuting patterns.	EDC and CMRPC	2022	Steve, David B.
5.4	Determine if and how a local Regional Transit Authority service could benefit Upton residents.	EDC and Town Planner	3+ years	Steve, David B., Gene
5.5	Assess feasibility of creating a transit hub. Identify potential State resources that could help.	EDC and ?	5+ years	Steve, Gene
5.6	Identify potential sites suitable for large-scale solar energy battery storage and data centers.	EDC and ?	3-5 years	Steve, Gene